

Exhibit C

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Judge dismisses lawsuit over Israel boycott ban, orders state of Kansas to pay legal fees

Sherman Smith; The Topeka Capital-Journal, Kan.

June 30--A federal judge has dismissed litigation over a state law requiring support for Israel after the Legislature this spring amended the act so it wouldn't apply to the plaintiff in the case.

The state still has to pay \$41,602.50 for her legal fees.

Under legislation passed in 2017, those who do business with the state first must sign documentation saying they won't boycott Israel. The American Civil Liberties Union brought a lawsuit challenging the law on behalf of a school teacher who refused to sign the agreement.

Esther Koontz, a contractor for the Kansas Department of Education and member of the Mennonite Church, declined to buy products made by Israeli companies in protest of the government's treatment of Palestinians.

In January, a judge blocked enforcement of the law as a violation of her First Amendment right to participate in a political boycott. That prompted the Legislature to modify the law by having it apply only to businesses and for contracts that exceed \$100,000.

"Thanks to the court's ruling, Kansas lawmakers have now scaled back this law, but it still runs afoul of the First Amendment," said ACLU attorney Brian Hauss. "The appropriate response would have been to repeal the law in its entirety. While the changes reduce the number of people required to sign the anti-boycott certification, the fundamental purpose of the law -- to suppress political boycotts of Israel and chill protected expression -- remains unconstitutional."

Because the ACLU secured the injunction that led to revisions in the law, which take effect Monday, the judge ordered the state to pay for Koontz' legal fees.

Kansas Attorney General Derek Schmidt, whose office was tasked with defending the law, said the narrower version is more focused on its intended purpose.

"We have successfully preserved the ability of the state of Kansas, through its lawmakers, to choose to stand in support of the state of Israel," Schmidt said.

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